

# IGNATIANA

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## Origin of the 'Romanity' of the Society\*

THE Society was born with a definitely 'Roman' character: "They are arch-papists; that is the end of the gospel" was the byword among the Protestants in Germany. This 'Romanity' runs all through the Society's history, and is concretely expressed in the fourth vow of special obedience to the Pope with regard to missions.

How did the idea of such special dedication and of this vow arise? From a reaction to the spirit of the 'Reformers'? From some kind of ambition and superiority-complex? Or from what? History gives the answer.

1. At *Montmartre* we see this Roman character appearing already, in the subsidiary clause of the vow which Ignatius and his Companions took, August 15, 1534: If the Palestine pilgrimage they promise is not possible within one year, they will offer themselves to the Pope to work wherever he pleases. Whence this Roman clause? Surely not from any polemical intention; but merely as a subsidiary means—and the surest—of finding the holy Will of God concerning the place of their apostolate.

They were agreed on a life of evangelical poverty and of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land: but, were the latter to prove impossible, they were not agreed on the place where they would undertake apostolic work, because (says St Ignatius) they came from different countries. To come to an agreement about it, they would turn to the Vicar of Christ for guidance. They did this for two reasons: the Pope knew the needs of the Church better than anyone else (Faber); and the desire of "obeying in all things the true Spouse of Christ, which is the Roman Church", was a guarantee that Christ would direct their apostolate through His Vicar on earth to His greater service and glory.

The Roman clause in their vow, therefore, only springs from their faith in the divine institution of the Papacy. It was

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\* Condensed by P. Ciampa S.J. from P. de Leturia S.J., *Aux sources de la 'Romanité' de la Compagnie de Jésus*, in *Christus*, 5, 1955, pp. 81-100.

not that they planned to go to Rome to save the Papacy in danger... They only meant to ask the Pope's help in solving their doubt about their field of apostolate.

2. The agreement on the alternative 'Palestine or Rome' was a reasoned election according to the Rules for 'the Third Time'. But Ignatius's interior devotion continued to incline him to Jerusalem: hence, he kept looking for some confirmation of their resolution from Above. He prayed the Blessed Virgin to be associated with her Son. The answer to these petitions came at *La Storta*: "I shall favour you in Rome." It drove away from Ignatius's mind every hesitation: Rome is the place where the Lord wants the Companions to work; they will go and offer themselves to the Pope!

In November 1538 Paul III accepts Ignatius's oblation. A month later Ignatius said his first Mass in the chapel of the Crib in St Mary Major, the Bethlehem of the Popes: his Jerusalem will be Rome.

3. So far, no question of a new Order: this came up in the spring of 1539, when the Pope sent the Companions out all over Italy. Shall they remain united permanently? And if so, only by the bond of charity? Or, in addition, by a bond of obedience too? To the first question they all with one voice answered at once "Yes. They *would* remain united for ever." But the question of the bond led to long discussions. If they had to adopt one of the old religious Rules, their ideal of a universal, very active apostolate would evidently be hindered. However, recently founded orders of Clerks Regular gave them hope for a papal approval of a new form of religious life, adapted to the new needs of the time... When the matter was put to the vote, unanimity was complete: they would take religious vows. And now the Roman alternative of the Montmartre vow, and the oblation to the Pope made the year before, received its definitive form of a *fourth vow* of special obedience to the Holy See "to serve God in faithful obedience to our Holy Father Paul III and His successors".—When asked for the reason of this novel vow, Ignatius used to refer to the Rules for Thinking with the Church and to the spirit of abnegation imprinted by the Exercises.

And thus history shows how one single thread runs through the whole development of the Society's 'Romanity': namely, the resolution of submitting their apostolate to the special direction of the Pope. This was first but a subsidiary means of discovering the Lord's holy Will, it became later a duty of conscience, and finally a cherished ideal characteristic of the new Society. Both rational and affective motives determined the Companions in this series of elections, mainly the former at Montmartre, mainly the latter at La Storta. But no trace is to be found, certainly not before the approval of the Society in 1540, of any preoccupation with a 'counter-reformation': the



envisioned apostolate is the universal one of the Gospel and the Exercises. Not until 1550 does St Ignatius propose that the 'defence of the Faith' be included in the Formula of the Institute.

This historical growth may show Ignatius as less of a genius, less military or politically minded than many believe him to have been: it certainly reveals him as definitely and in the first place more of a priest and a mystic.

## The Spiritual Exercises and the Early Missions in India\*

THE person and the apostolic methods of Xavier cannot be understood without the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. Not only did they decide his whole life, but they permeated all his missionary activities.

The decisive turn of Xavier's life at Paris, and the few years he lived in close contact with "his Father in Christi visceribus", left a deep impact on his own spirituality. The Exercises is the only book—besides the Bible and the Breviary—which is quoted in his letters. In his prayers for the conversion of the infidels a clear hint is found of each of the four weeks and of the basic meditations of the Ignatian Exercises.

Another and more definite proof of the Ignatian spirituality of Xavier is found in his letters, when he explains the motives which impel him to go from India to Japan and from there to China: they are "the greater difficulty", "the greater service of God", in a word, the Rules of Election. It is worth noting that Xavier used preferably the Second Time of Election. His soul was extremely sensitive to the touch of consolation and desolation, and he took his decisions accordingly. "From what I am experiencing in my soul, it seems to me that either I or somebody else of the Society will go to Japan in two years' time", thus he writes on Jan. 20th, 1548. And a year later, "When I got information about Japan, it took me a long time to decide whether I should go or not; but when God Our Lord was pleased to make me feel within my soul that my going there would be for His service, it seemed to me that I would be worse than the infidels of Japan, if I abandoned that plan."

A man so deeply imbued with the spirituality of the Exercises had to show that spirit in his apostolic activity. His catechetical explanations bear a striking resemblance to the methods of prayer taught by St Ignatius, and his presentation of Christ follows the very frame of the Exercises. There is more than that. Xavier's ideal was to bring as many people as possible to make a

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\*A summary, by Francis Barjau, of Fr I. Iparraguirre's article "Los Ejercicios Espirituales Ignacianos, el método misional de S. Francisco Javier y la misión jesuítica de la India en el siglo XVI", *Studia Missionalia V* (1950) pp. 3-43.

retreat. He did so himself at Goa, and asked the Fathers to do the same wherever they were. Unfortunately, not all shared his conviction about the usefulness of retreats. To understand their reluctance we must bear in mind that in those days annual retreats were not yet in use, not even in the Society, and that the practice Xavier tried to impose on St Paul's College, at Goa, was not in force in our schools of Europe till some decades later.

Another difficulty was the lack of personnel. Hence his incessant appeals to Europe to send people, even such as were not able to do strenuous work but who could devote their lives to giving retreats.

Xavier used the retreat as a means of training catechists. The three Japanese who were to help him in the new mission of Japan made a full-month retreat, with such profit that "all those who are there", writes Xavier from Malaca, "would like to share in the virtues that God put in them".

Further Xavier used to bring people to the practice of the Spiritual Exercises by giving them a copy of the three methods of prayer found at the end of the 4th Week. From them the future retreatant could learn mental prayer and grow able to draw great profit from the Exercises.

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Among the collaborators or successors of Francis Xavier, four names must be mentioned: Berze, H. Henriques, Cabral and Jerome Xavier, the Saint's grand-nephew.

As St Francis Xavier had founded the Retreat House of Goa, so Fr Berze started the same ministry at Ormuz. His extraordinary ability at giving retreats had been shown already during his journey to India. At Ormuz he gave the Exercises to the most influential people, ecclesiastical and civil officials, who afterwards became his most devoted collaborators.

In South India, Fr H. Henriques as early as 1557 opened a Retreat House for Jesuit missionaries, periodically to regain both corporal and spiritual strength, and Fr Cabral did the same in Bassein.

When in 1581 Fr Jerome Xavier arrived in India, retreats were again an unheard of practice even among Jesuits and were rather looked down upon as a punishment. It required the great authority of Fr Jerome, as Novice Master and Rector of Bassein and Cochin, to overcome the opposition. In the Provincial Congregation of 1588 it was decided that the Fathers who were living alone in Mission stations should every year spend some days in one of the Colleges or in the villas attached to them, for corporal and spiritual rest. And the practice of some days of retreat was strongly recommended. Fr Jerome extended his zeal to outsiders also, especially clergy and seminarians. But when in 1594 Fr Jerome was sent to the Moghul Mission, the work he had promoted died out.



# The Spiritual Exercises and Union with God<sup>1</sup>

NOBODY questions the singular effectiveness of the Spiritual Exercises as a method for bringing souls to purpose and plan their sanctification. Popes and saints have again and again commended and used them as such. But are they nothing more? When St Ignatius composed his book, was his view restricted to the conversion of sinners and to setting them on the road of essential sanctity; or did he have a notion that the road he was tracing and laying out ran on to any heights of union with God, not excluding mystical degrees?

It may seem strange, but it is a fact that, when confronted with this question, which after all is not involved, many minds are beset with prejudices: either by preconceptions about the relative rank of asceticism and mysticism in the spiritual life, or by their personal convictions anent the history and the spirit of the Society. Why not keep to the sources?

*A priori*, as Fr Peeters points out when trying to clear the decks for his study of the text, some papal pronouncements and certain facts of history dip the balance rather in favour of the larger solution.

There is in particular a passage from Pius XI's jubilee encyclical *Mens nostra*: "Indeed, the excellence of the spiritual doctrine —altogether free from the perils and errors of false mysticism; the admirable facility of adapting the Exercises to any order or state of man —whether devoted to *contemplation in the cloisters* or leading an active life in the affairs of the world; the apt co-ordination of the various parts; the wonderful and lucid order in the meditations of truths that seem to follow naturally one from another; and lastly the spiritual lessons —which, after casting off the yoke of sin and washing away the diseases inherent in his morals, lead a man through the safe paths of abnegation and the removal of evil habits *up to the supreme heights of prayer and divine love*; all these are without doubt things which sufficiently show the efficacious nature of the Ignatian method and which abundantly commend the Spiritual Exercises." <sup>2</sup> (*Italics are ours.*)

And there are the historically well-known facts of the mystical graces received by Ignatius himself and by a number of those who made the Exercises right in the beginning.

When himself making the meditations and contemplations which he would codify as his Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius was

1. L. Peeters S.J., *Vers l'union divine par les Exercices de S. Ignace*, 2nd ed., Louvain 1931. Fr H. L. Brozowski of the Wisconsin Province has produced a translation of the book, which will be out very soon now (Bruce Co. 400 N. Broadway, Milwaukee 1, Wis.).

2. *Mens nostra*: Pius XI (CTS ed. 6 Jan. 1944, Trichy, No. 36, p. 21).

certainly led by mystical ways: frequent visions of the Holy Trinity, about creation, the presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist... above all that illumination at the Cardoñer river-side in which he says that he learned more than in all the remainder of his life. "Believe me, Polanco, I cannot even narrate one of the thousand favours bestowed by God upon me... Nobody would understand what I say..."<sup>3</sup> In his book he endeavoured to blaze and mark out the way he had followed, unceasingly revising his text in the light of his later experiences, with a view to helping other souls on the same pilgrimage: "He did not compose the Sp. Ex. at one stretch" Polanco attests, "but he regularly jotted down all that took place in his soul and experienced to be useful, because he was thinking that others too might profit from it."<sup>4</sup>

And how numerous are the mystics Ignatius or his sons trained in the same school of the Exercises: Francis Xavier, Peter Lefebvre, Francis Borgia, did they rise to high mystical contemplation independently of Ignatius's Exercises? Or by and through them? St Teresa and St Francis of Sales bear witness to the light and guidance which they found for their spiritual ascent in the Ignatian Exercises.

All this, however, is *a priori*. Fr Peeters reaches his conclusions by the study of the text itself. We cannot summarize the whole book: we will only point out one or two traits of capital importance (studied by Fr Peeters in his chapters II and III): the end appointed to the Exercises by St Ignatius, and the chief means he prescribes for the attainment of that end.

### 1. The End of the Exercises

"The regulation of one's life" writes St Ignatius [21]. Some authors, Frs de Grandmaison and de Guibert being the most quoted of them, endeavour to prove from this phrase that the Ignatian retreat is intended chiefly, if not exclusively, for the choice of a state of life<sup>5</sup>. Undoubtedly the Exercises are a pre-eminent means for such a purpose. But we find it attested by Fr Nadal that St Ignatius and his companions were often giving the Exercises to people whose vocation was already quite settled and who had therefore no choice to make. No, the choice of a state of life cannot have been the only, nor even the chief, purpose of the Exercises: After "joining (the King) in this enterprise" — whether as a result of a decision come to during a retreat election, or long years before —, there remains all the becoming "willing to labour with me", the decision to "follow me in suffering" and "follow me in glory" [95]; and that for *all* the exercitants, the lay apostles as well as the religious.

3. N. Lancicii, *Opuscula Spirituality*; V. II, c. 7, p. 546 Ingoldstadt 1724.

4. *The Tale of the Pilgrim*, Ch. XI, No. 99.

5. L. de Grandmaison; *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 1930, p. 397. Jos. de Guibert; *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* 1925, pp. 180, 190.



There remains to attain the "to be glad and rejoice intensely *because of the great joy and the glory of Christ our Lord*" [ 221 ].

All-out and pure love for Christ our Lord *and* for God the Creator (even in the supposition that the Contemplation to attain love of God be not the culminating peak of the Exercises) and all the dispositions that must inspirit the rest of one's life after the retreat, those are the end pursued in the Ignatian Exercises. And if Ignatius prompted *also* those deliberating about their vocation to make his Exercises, he said himself that the reason for it was that "during a retreat spiritual experiences are as a rule more intense": the retreat is a most propitious time *also* for finding out one's vocation, but such an election can only be an accessory, not the principal, purpose of a retreat.

Fr Peeters, in a rapid survey of the consecutive steps in the Exercises, shows a kind of supernatural instinct gradually developing during that month-long period of prayer and contact with Christ. He identifies it as "a love of friendship between God and His purified, enlightened, deified creature". "That is the very nature of perfection: charity. Is not charity the queen of virtues, the plenitude of the Law? Charity alone, then, can establish one in the final position to be attained through the Exercises, the regulation of one's life." "How deep and adequate is the formula wherein Saint Peter Canisius condensed the ends of the Exercises: one, the conquest of self; two, preventing disorderly inclinations from influencing one's conduct; three, *the orderly focussing of one's inclinations upon God.*"<sup>6</sup>

## 2. The Chief Means to this End

Which means does St Ignatius prescribe for attaining this end? Do not be misled by the floods of praise lavished upon "the signal method", "the irresistible mechanism he has tooled off to perfection",...into overlooking the stream of life that sustains and quickens all those practical devices he exhorts the exercitant to use. Remember Demosthenes's answer when asked wherein lay the secret of the art of eloquence: "First rule, action," he said, "second rule, action; third rule, action." Fr Peeters similarly sums up the secret of the practice of the Exercises in one word: prayer, now of one form, now of another. The first Introductory Observation states this explicitly: "every method of...meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer... (are) Spiritual Exercises." All the devices and strategic precautions proposed for the help of the exercitant converge upon the hours of prayer, so orderly and gradually arrayed for the working out of the amendment and transformation of one's life.<sup>7</sup>

6. *Finis exercitiorum in tribus consistit: primo, ut homo seipsum vincat; secundo, ut mala affectione non moveatur; tertio, ut affectiones in Deum ordinet* (Mon. Hist. S. J.; Ex. Sp.: p. 986, No. 2). Quoted in Peeters, o.c., p. 66.

7. L. Peeters, o.c., p. 73. The whole chapter is entitled, "The better part" — *optimam partem elegit quae non auferetur ab ea.*

Here again the author can quote many definite and authoritative texts. Nadal, once more comes first: "When no election is to be made, the only purpose of the Exercises is to train for prayer... Ignatius was convinced that in them are provided, and the driving force, and the starting-point, of the ascent to the most perfect and most sublime prayer... A soul that has made the Exercises is in possession of all the principles for praying according to the three traditional ways of the spiritual life... It is thanks to the Exercises that our Father Master Ignatius attained such a high degree of contemplation..."<sup>8</sup> What a pity we have no space to quote the whole page!

And yet, some have wondered whether St Ignatius did not stray away from the traditions of mystics on a point of the greatest moment: "He did not give to prayer the first place in the interior life (they say). When some Father was praised in his presence for being a man of high prayer, he observed, 'Rather say, he is a man of great mortification.' He always refused to allow long hours of prayer. For scholastics he even suppressed the meditation. In a word, he clearly relied more on asceticism than on contemplation for progress in the interior life."

The objection rests on a very superficial knowledge of St Ignatius's utterances. Just page through the Constitutions: From the novices, whose chief experiment must be the One month's retreat "wherein they must acquire a habit of mental and vocal prayer for life", to 'operarii', to Rectors, to the General of the Society, whose very first qualification must be an outstanding intimacy with God "in prayer and in all his actions",—every Jesuit is expected to live in a *state* of seeking and finding God in everything... of sincerely serving and pleasing the divine Goodness for Itself... placing their whole affection on the Creator... And as for scholastics, they must "endeavour to nourish their piety by realizing the presence of God on every occasion... If every particular thing they do is tending to the service of God, everything is prayer..."<sup>9</sup>

In reality the objection arises from a mistaken conception of the essence of the mystical life. There is a particular form of it proper to contemplatives, but that form is not its essence. Remember St Thomas Aquinas's characterization of Mixed Life "*contemplari et contemplata tradere*", and that every Jesuit is enjoined to grow constantly more "*in actione contemplativus*".

The mystical life, when stripped of all unessentials, consists in "perfect union of the soul with God in pure love". St Ignatius aspired to this for all his sons, and even for all who entrusted him with their spiritual direction. So true is this that some Rules for the discernment of spirits and the Contemplation to attain love of God obtain their full meaning only in the

8. Mon. Hist. S.J. Epist. P. Nadal, Vol. IV, p. 666f.

9. Reread IGNATIANA (March) pp. 164-5.



hypothesis of properly mystical graces<sup>10</sup> : this, however, is but a side-proof of our thesis.

Anyone with an open mind and with a discerning attention to the essentials of the spiritual life will soon be convinced by Fr Peeters's book. It is in view of a total love and service of God that Ignatius insisted so much on stripping oneself of all self-love in religious life and apostolic endeavours. Knowing the divine liberality, he had no doubt, as he says in our 19th Rule of the Summary, that in the very measure wherein the soul surrenders self, in that measure divine love invades the soul and fills it with spiritual gifts.

There is much more to be found in Fr Peeters's book. It gives the reader a deep knowledge of the spiritual life-current that flows through the Exercises. It gives him a glimpse of the wonderful union with God that was granted to our holy Father. It brings him in touch with the spiritual *élan* of the first Companions, and thus arouses in him a desire of going back to the sources of our history.

N. POLET

## The Mind of our Holy Founder on our External Manner of Life

**S**T IGNATIUS'S Code of Poverty is lengthy and minute. His legislation on 'the external manner of life' of Jesuit communities is confined mostly to general norms or principles for the guidance of Superiors.

These norms fall into three categories: one norm suggesting a lesser austerity; others inclining towards greater austerity; a last one which may lean either way depending on particular circumstances.

The most comprehensive exposition of the thought of our holy Father is found in the Constitutions, P. VI, c. 2, n. 16: "As for food, sleep and the use of other things that are either necessary or matter of convenience, even though our manner of life should be ordinary, in no way at variance with what a local physician would judge reasonable, —so that any further curtailment individuals might resort to would be matter of personal piety, not of obligation— yet we must always take account of humility, poverty, and spiritual edification, which should at all times be our care in the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

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10. So also the end of the 2nd Introductory Observation, "For it is not to know much but it is to understand intimately and relish the truth that fills and satisfies the soul." And "taste the sweetness of the divinity" [124].

1. Other main texts are: Ex. Gen., c. 4, n. 26: Form. Iulii III, n. 8, end.

(I) A. First norm : 'ordinary' life

"For good reasons, having always in view God's greater service" (Ex. Gen. c. I, n. 6), the Founder of the Society deliberately rejected for his Order the external austerities of the older monastic Orders as to fasts, vigils, etc. —what he calls "the regular penances or corporal austerities obligatory on all" (ibid.). Note that the emphasis is on the words 'obligatory on all'. "St Ignatius", V. R. Fr General comments in his Letter on Poverty, "did not want us to have a monk's habit, to go barefoot, or to observe fasts and vigils by rule" (A. R. XII, 1951, n. 8, p. 115). In other words, he wished his sons to lead an 'ordinary (communis)' life. (Ex. Gen., ibid.; P. VI, ibid.)

The same idea is expressed in yet another form: "In the matter of food, dress and other externals, they should conform themselves to the common and approved custom of upright priests" (Form. Iulii III, n. 8). This expression 'honestorum sacerdotum', —which is met in only one place: the earlier draft of the Constitutions—, is sometimes misunderstood. "From the history of this phrase", writes Fr General, "and from a comparison of various passages in the Constitutions, it would seem to mean that we are to be like priests whose ambition it is to be exemplary and to try and escape from the lax worldliness of the times" (ibid.).<sup>2</sup>

Why did St Ignatius reject "regular penances or corporal austerities obligatory on all"? — "For good reasons," he says, "having always in view God's greater service." The main reason he mentions is health: "There should not be lacking what sustains nature and keeps it going for God's service and praise" (P. III, c. 2, n. 3; cf. P. VI, c. 2, K, M). The Society is entirely dedicated to the apostolate: Fasts or vigils 'obligatory on all' would prove a grave obstacle to the service of God in the apostolate.

Manare (Exhortationes L. II, Exh. 6, pp. 409-11) mentions other reasons:

(a) the example of Christ our Lord and His apostles, "whose food and apparel were ordinary; aye, Christ Himself led an ordinary life in order to impart His divine doctrine to all men";

(b) a principle of spirituality: "Most people thought that perfection consisted in austerity of life and an uncommon habit: this error had to be done away with" by showing that self-abnegation was of greater moment;

(c) "to make us more easily approach all men of all classes: clerics, monks, townsmen, countrymen";

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2. His Paternity points out several distortions to which the expression has led. He shows that the mind of St Ignatius is by no means "that we ought in externals to live completely according to the norms of the local secular clergy" (p. 115). Nay, "worlds apart is our Jesuit life from that of even 'upright' priests, when we discern how Ours should be outstanding for the spirit of humility, poverty and obedience, in the use made of things temporal" (p. 116).



(d) in order to promote uniformity and foster union among members of the Society, so widely different in nationality, culture, background, ...

## **B. Humility, poverty, spiritual edification**

' Ordinary life ' is only *one* norm; St Ignatius mentions three others which must be taken into account along with it: " humility, poverty, and spiritual edification, which should at all times be our care in the Lord ". As a matter of fact, " When we examine this text ( of P. VI, c. 2, n. 16 ) to see what is stated directly and what is put indirectly, it is evident that the emphasis is on humility, poverty, edification " ( A.R. *ibid.* ).

These, then, are the three more important norms:

1) First, humility. " We must always have in view what is necessary and becoming, not at all what savours in any way of display " explains St Ignatius in connection with the use of a mount by members of the Society ( P. VI, c. 2, K ). In our dress, too, " due regard for humility is to be preserved in all things " ( *ibid.* n. 15 ).

2) Next, poverty. On poverty, one of his fond favourites, Ignatius has a good deal more to say. He states two principles: The first is repeated on several occasions: As a rule, Ours should be provided with " things necessary and convenient " ( P. VI, c. 2, nn. 5, 11, K, 16 ) but never with " superfluities " ( P. III, c. 2, C; cfr P. VI, c. 2, K ). The other is one of which a candidate to the Society must be warned: " If he wishes to live in the Society, let him be persuaded that his food, drink, clothing and lodging will be such as *become poor men*, and that the meanest things in the house will be given to him " ( Ex. Gen. c. 4, n. 26 ).

On the two or three occasions when the Founder descends to more practical applications ( see further ), poverty is the norm that is most emphasized. ( P. V, c. 2, nn. 14, 15, 16 )

3) Finally, edification. St Ignatius's constant preoccupation with good example or ' edification ' has been exposed elsewhere in *IGNATIANA* ( No. 1, pp. 9-11 ). He holds that his principle " No less by good works, nay more than by words must they be solicitous to edify those with whom they treat " ( P. VII, c. 4, n. 2 ) applies as well to the use of such commonplace things as " food, sleep, and other things that are either necessary or matter of convenience ".

## **C. Adaptation to local and personal circumstances**

St Ignatius proposes a fifth norm: Conformity or adaptation to local and personal conditions.

Conformity to local conditions: Our dress should " conform to the usage of the place where ( we ) live " ( P. VI, c. 2, n. 15 ), " or should at least not strikingly differ from it " ( *ibid.*, L );

our food, sleep, etc., ought to be "in no way at variance with what a local physician would judge reasonable" (ibid., n. 16).

Adaptation to personal conditions: This is an habitual principle with our holy Father. (VI, 2, M, N)

(II) What has been said elsewhere (No. 7, p. 145ff) of St Ignatius's legislation on poverty applies also to our external manner of life: there is a double aspect to it, "there is a certain minimum austerity binding on all; there is besides that more handsome service held out to the individual member" (A.R. XII, 6, p.113).

The norms, enumerated above, that regulate our external manner of life apply to communities. Whatever be, according to those norms, the manner and standard of life of a Jesuit community, individual members are always welcome to impose on themselves further austerities and to "undertake (penances and bodily hardships) which they judge, with the Superior's approval, will make for to their greater spiritual progress" (Ex. Gen., c. 1, n. 6). This principle, so characteristic of Ignatian legislation, is repeated again and again. Great austerities are, therefore, not foreign to the Society, but they are undertaken "as a matter of devotion, not of obligation, a reasonable service paid by the body to God, according to each one's need or zeal for spiritual progress" (Form. Iulii III, n. 8; cfr P. VI, 2, 16).

This explains why in the Society "it is not to be deemed singular if one fasts or keeps abstinence when others do not" (Epit. 210, §2).

St Ignatius goes further: To those who would join the Society he proposes as an ideal the example of the first companions and challenges them to match or even to surpass their austerities: "For, since those who first joined the Society were tried by poverty and by greater want of bodily necessities, so those who follow after them ought to take care, as far as it is possible, to reach the same degree of self-denial and even to go beyond it, in the Lord" (Ex. Gen., c. 4, n. 26). However, lest carried away by their zeal they go too far, to the detriment of their health and their apostolate, all such voluntary austerities shall be submitted to the judgement of the confessor or the superior. (Ex. Gen., c. 1, n. 6; P. III, c. 2, n. 5)

(III) Two instances may be quoted in which St Ignatius himself applies his norms to practical cases.

First, with regard to travelling. He writes, "That we may go forward with due regard for poverty also in matter of travelling, there will ordinarily be no horse in our houses for the use of anyone in the Society, be he superior or subject" (VI, 2, 14). He hastens to add, "unless it were done on account of prolonged ill health or pressing need, for purposes of public service, especially among large populations. For in such cases one must consider the general good and the health of Ours rather than to lay down as absolute rule for the time being or for ever, or to fasten one's



attention only on the greater poverty of going on foot than of being mounted " (ibid., K).

Next, with regard to dress. "In the matter of dress, three things must be observed: first, it must be seemly; second, it must conform to the usage of the place where we live (or at least not strikingly differ from it); third, it must not give the lie to our profession of poverty, —as it would do if we wore silks and other costly materials; these must be shunned, if for the greater glory of God due respect for humility and submission is to be preserved in all things. (Such is the rule for new clothes which the House provides. If, however, a new recruit to the Society arrives dressed in some kind of more costly material, there is no objection to his wearing it. Similarly, if in particular circumstances or need someone ought to be given better clothes, —as long as they are seemly. But such materials must not be used for regular apparel. Still, account must be taken of the fact that all are not equally strong, nor equally healthy, nor of an age that takes everything in stride: things should therefore be regulated for the particular good of such persons and the common good of the others, and as far as possible what is needed should be provided to the greater glory of God )" (VI, 2, 15, L, M).

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It may be of interest to quote here, by way of conclusion, how the Society, at the end of the first century of its existence, understood St Ignatius's legislation on dress: "There is no particular costume in the Society", wrote Fr Bartoli. "As for the upright collar which we wear, St Ignatius, who was a Spaniard, had borrowed it from the modest costume of the priests of his country; and the surtout which our students wear instead of a cloak was adopted by him in imitation of those of the University of Paris, where he himself had studied and which had sent the first students to his Society.

"Yet this dress is not so exclusively adopted by us as to make it obligatory on us to wear it in all countries. We may adopt another if there is any good reason for doing so, or if the customs of the place make it advisable; but in our clerical quality it ought always to be an ecclesiastical habit. As for the form and material, three conditions were prescribed by St Ignatius: modesty, conformity to the place where we live and to the spirit of poverty.

"Another reason still existed for not subjecting us to a particular and singular dress: the new heresies having excited in the north of Europe an extreme antipathy for the religious habit, and the Society being destined to be perpetually in contact with those peoples, it was prudent not to impose upon us a dress which would have caused us to be shunned like wild beasts by the very persons whom we hope to win back to the right path by having familiar intercourse with them. Thus, among the Gentiles, where the habit of the literary men, such as is worn

by the mandarins in China and the brahmins in India, is held in the highest honour, we lay aside our ecclesiastical garments for a time and adopt the former; and in wholly heretical countries, where the latter would not be tolerated, we dress as shopkeepers, doctors, artists, or even servants, that we may communicate with the concealed Catholics without exciting suspicion." (*Life of St Ignatius*, Vol. II, Bk III, ch. 3, pp. 36-37, — published in 1659)

## God's Touch & the Devil's Agitation

(from *St Ignatius's letters*)

To Sister Rajadell \*,

**Y**OU ask me to let you know in detail what Our Lord suggests to me about you, and to give you my opinion clearly, not vaguely. I shall willingly speak in this frank manner: and if in anything I appear to be harsh, take it as meant not towards you but towards anyone who would destroy your peace of mind.

The evil one will always be eager to upset you and lessen your service to Our Lord. For the tempter has two strings to his bow. One is to shoot in a shaft of false humility, the other of exaggerated fear of God. Let me begin with the first. He suggests you cannot possibly live up to the high standards you propose to follow; for how can you spend a whole life as a Poor Clare in penance like this? No relatives or friends to vary the monotony; no pleasure in anything you can call your own; a life, not only lonely, but lacking even the minimum requirements of a decent ease. Surely (he suggests) one can save one's soul without the added danger of resolutions to which one cannot remain faithful: you couldn't achieve your present objective, though your span of life were longer than the longest...

But you will, of course, remember what he conveniently omits to say, that is: the consolation and joy which Our Lord is accustomed to heap upon His really generous and selfless volunteers, who instead of fearing sacrifice face it; and who hold out their hands and ask for more instead of running away with them almost empty. Their one desire is to share His sufferings.

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\* With grateful acknowledgement to Fr H. B. Loughnan of the Australian Province, who allows us to publish his translation. He writes, by way of introduction: "The Sister Rajadell, to whom this letter is addressed, was a member of the Poor Clares' Convent of Barcelona and seems to have been just a good pious nun. She was distressed at the laxity of her community: its good name had suffered considerably in the Report made by the Benedictine monks who had been sent as Visitators. They had mentioned, among other matters, that the vow of poverty was not observed — private funds and private servants being allowed; that clausura had broken down — for, the nuns were to be seen walking about the town and men were allowed into the convent-parlours. This same Sister Rajadell would later on be commissioned by the Pope to reintroduce the primitive observance, and would succeed admirably in this entrusted charge."



Failing in his attack, the evil one tries another line: a little boasting and self-esteem. He will make it, for instance, occur to you that a religious such as you must really be very holy and very good (though possibly without much ground for thinking so). Now, if through genuine humility and self-knowledge you are proof against this kind of attack, he advances from another angle. For seeing you are humble and depending on God for help and aware of your weak points, he plays upon this last attitude. He suggests, for example, that it is just egoism and boasting when you mention some successful work or good resolution or holy desire. He doesn't wish you ever to mention such things or to say God has granted you such blessings. Why that? Because he can thus prevent you from helping others when you could do so by talking of these favours. And in that way he not only causes harm to yourself but makes you also fail to help others. Note that I say 'harm to yourself': for if you openly acknowledge the favours God has done you, you stir yourself to greater effort. (Of course, when I make this point I take it for granted that you don't exaggerate these bits of personal experience and only mention them when they will be appreciated at their true worth as well as believed.) This is what I mean by false humility in one who really is humble.

And as a matter of fact, your way of speaking about yourself is a good illustration of false humility. For you cannot bring yourself to say, "I desire to serve Christ our Lord" or "God has given me the yearning to serve Him". No, you must water it down and say, "I *think* I desire to serve Him", "God *seems* to have given me this desire". Look at this quite simply, and you will see at once that a desire to serve Christ comes from Him and no one else; it is His gift. By openly admitting this, you give praise to Him: it is in Him, not in yourself, that you are rejoicing.

So, when the infernal tempter suggests desertion, give him this for a direct answer, "I am the servant of Christ and serve Him I shall" —and don't be afraid of this sounding like presumptuous pride.

Here then is a practice which I want you carefully to follow: If you should feel unduly elated, humble yourself by recalling past sin and present unworthiness; but if you experience depression or discouragement, reinforce your strength by true hope and faith in Our Lord, recall His blessings, realize how greatly He loves you and is waiting upon you with His graces. And meanwhile don't forget that the enemy is not in the least concerned whether it is a lie or the truth that he is speaking. His one concern is to score against you. But it is up to you to do the scoring. Whenever he tries to terrify you with thoughts of the divine justice, increase your trust in the divine mercy; and when there comes the suggestion that because God is infinitely merciful you can be careless, then it is for you to dwell on His justice.

After all, does not Scripture say (Eccles. 13/11 ?), "Be not so humble that your humiliation leads you to folly"? •

Be ever watchful! For, if the enemy finds he cannot make you timorous, so that you give up the generous desires which Our Lord puts in your heart, he shoots in his second shaft, —that of exaggerated fear of God based, chiefly, on past sins. And he won't munch his words! Effecting suddenly a complete change of front, he will pick holes, big holes, in anything you have done for God: he will fix your attention on imperfections you have admitted in God's service and swell them into ugly sins, unpardonable offences, for which Our Lord must have cut you off as an outcast. He will strive to persuade you that such a great sinner as you are must surely have been rejected by God.

Such are always his tactics: If he finds a person with a lax conscience, he does all in his power to make venial sin seem nothing at all and mortal sin —even very grave mortal sin— of not much account. But when he runs up against a conscience that is tender (and note, please, that a tender conscience is no defect!) then he sows confusion, aggravates everything, shows up as grave sin what is no sin at all, blackens as defect what is even perfection. Whenever he cannot bring a soul to sin, he endeavours at least to torment it.

Both God and the devil act upon our souls. God first: He grants interior light and consolation. But during our mortal life these cannot shine for ever. And as soon as their lustre begins to dim, the enemy seizes his opportunity. And God permits this, for our spiritual progress.

Just a few more words about it: because this matter is very important.

When a soul has really given itself wholly to God, He keeps leading it onwards. He consoles it in a way unknown to anyone who keeps anything back. The generous giver Our Lord protects from all anxiety. He entices him to love God perfectly, without any reserve; there is commonly experienced a deeper spiritual insight, or what we might call a deeper and more gripping knowledge of divine truths, a teaching of many secret truths. The soul knows it is in the very arms of God: its efforts are pleasure and its fatigue is rest. When led along this path of favour and interior warmth and consolation, a heavy load is light and penance or heroic effort is actually sweet. The road upwards lies open and waiting; the level one along the flat is left behind.

But this is neither a continuous nor a permanent state: it has its seasons, which are under God's control. It is meant to help us to become more holy and prayerful. When it passes, the evil one attempts to harass and disturb us even more than God has been consoling and strengthening. One experiences low spirits and lack of soul-energy, —and all this without anything to account for it. To pray with unction is impossible, or to



contemplate with inward relish the scenes of Our Lord's life, or to talk about, or even listen to, spiritual things with any interest. When thus dispirited, and disinclined to effort while oppressed by dangerous thoughts, there comes the suggestion that God is not really interested in us; and we half-believe that we are no longer one of His inner circle of friends, that anything we have on hand is just a waste of time, that our past wonderful experiences were merely due to autosuggestion. Complete loss of heart is what the enemy is aiming at in this state: we become all too painfully aware of our unhappiness and we take a very lowly view of ourselves.

I repeat what I said before: When filled with consolation, we must recall how utterly dependent we are on God, and that trials *will* come to test our selflessness. On the contrary, when in doubt or low spirits, we must react strongly and not be discontented; our one duty is to do God's Will and to hope patiently for His consoling help; in the meantime keep our soul in peace, and assured that His Light will return.

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Sometimes God moves, or even impels, one towards a particular line of conduct. It is a spiritual movement, —God speaking wordlessly to the soul and raising it to heights of love. This attraction is so noticeable that one could not oppose it even if one wanted to. (But always remember this warning: The attraction must be in entire conformity with the commandments of God and of His Church and leave one ready to humble obedience to one's Superiors. The reason of this is obvious, namely that the Holy Spirit would be inconsistent if His private inspirations ran counter to the more usual expression of His will.) Now, when the delight of this inner movement or attraction ceases to be felt, the evil one, disguised as an angel of light, may suggest considerable additions to the line of conduct we were urged to follow; or instead he may whittle down the content of the message inspired and suggest a host of embarrassments and difficulties; or he may play up the uncontestable fact that never have we fully carried out what we knew God wanted from us. Here again, watchfulness is needed, and more than ever.

To end with, here is a last piece of advice: It may often be a good thing to forgo the pleasure of talking on spiritual matters, and instead to talk only of what others take interest in, leaving out your own favourite subjects. If you are going to help others, you will have to do this often. We are like a guide at a dangerous ford: If the passage is clear, he leads on; if it's doubtful, he delays. So, when you see it is the right moment, do good to others; otherwise, wait.

I finish by asking the Most Sacred Trinity to give you grace faithfully to carry out the Will of God.

Poor in goodness  
IGNACIO

Venice, June 18, 1536

# The Ignatian Vision of the Universe and of Man\*

ONE of the first requisites of the apostolate is that it be adapted to the concerns that interest and preoccupy the minds of the people whom it wants to reach and influence. Different epochs are troubled by different problems which influence even the perspective wherein the contemporary Christians consider the truths of the Fatih and the moral precepts that must govern their conduct.

It is not likely that the people of the Renaissance would have been highly susceptible to the spirituality, the example and the doctrines of the Fathers of the Desert. Now, St Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises were composed in the Age of Chivalry, and history relates with amazement the wonderful effects of conversion and sanctification which the grace of God did operate through them. But we are no longer living in the Age of Chivalry.

Which is the mental and spiritual atmosphere of our own times? In what perspective do contemporary people consider the truths of supernatural religion or even the questions of natural philosophy? (And by 'people' an apostle should mean, not only the adherents of positive religions, but also the contemners and enemies of all religion; for these too influence contemporary mental and moral atmosphere.) Is our apostolate through the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises able to permeate the contemporary atmosphere of mental preoccupations? Is it in focus with the contemporary perspective of interests? Or has it gotten out of touch with the man of today?

Fr Daniélou points to two characteristic angles of present-day perspective about religion and spirituality: Today's concern centres upon the universe and upon man; the two ideologies that are waging a war to the death for predominance uphold, the one, a merely material, self-explaining, evolutionary world and a humanity free of all obligation to any supra-human 'bogy', the other sees the universe in the light of a theology distinctly biblical ("those master ideas of the Old Testament, which are also those of the New, and which our present theology has just recently rediscovered") and finds in history a perspective that gives to the existence of man a definite value and direction.

And these two characteristic angles of contemporary perspective, says Fr Daniélou, characterize also precisely Ignatian spirituality as it is born and bred from the Exercises: It is fundamentally biblical and it exalts in a singular way the greatness of man's destiny. It is right on the mark.

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\**La Vision Ignatienne du monde et de l'homme*, Jean Daniélou, Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique, 1950, pp. 5-17. A translation of the article appeared in *Cross Currents*, Fall 1954, pp. 357-366.



## I. The Universe proclaims God

1. The first characteristic of the Ignatian spirit is a sense of the holiness and the infinite majesty of the triune God. The mystery of the Trinity is the centre of the Ignatian vision, but not only in its internal relations: also in its great works, the *magnalia Dei*, the creation and redemption of the world. "He works and labours in all things." Ignatius was seized by the grandeur of God's accomplishments, and the first Companions were very familiar with the same wonder: We have some remarkable texts on the subject from Nadal. (Cf *Dieu Vivant*, V, p. 39)

Is there any need to underline the biblical character of this? The Bible is a concrete history of the marvellous works of God, the contemplation of which stirred the Virgin Mary to cry out across the ages, "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*". And as to the modern character of it, all the great philosophies of the last century have been marked by the discovery of this new dimension of history, the religious ones to deepen it out, Marx and his school to deny and fight it tooth and nail.

2. The second characteristic of Ignatius's vision of the world is the central place held by Christ, the Redeemer. The goal of history, the end of the Works of God, is the establishment of the "Kingdom of God": an order of things where the sovereignty of God is recognized freely by His spiritual creatures. This constitutes precisely that "glory of God" which is ever on Ignatius's lips.

But note that the Christ of Ignatius is not like the Christ of the Protestants a reality of the past. He is still living, continuing to accomplish His work in the Church. His "mission" is still being extended through the Church and the Pope: Who puts himself in the hands of the Pope, shares in the ever-actual Work of Christ.

Scriptural? Modern? The principal objection to Christianity today is that it is outdated: It was a great thing in the past, it has produced a civilization; but today it is superseded by more vitalizing and more real institutions... To which the Church's answer is the expansion of the apostolate through the laity.

3. But the Great Work of God, through Christ, is no smooth walk-in or walk-over! It is accomplished in strife and conflict. And, surely, Ignatius has stressed the point! The Three Sins, The Kingdom, Two Standards, Rules for the Discernment of Spirits...

Conformable to the Bible? Why, from the 2nd chapter of Genesis in the very presence of God there appears an adversary who struggles to mar the *magnalia Dei*. The conflict runs through the entire Old Testament. On the threshold of the Public Life, Satan dares to tempt the Messiah Himself...

And, of course, Marxism too has to take account of the conflict. For him it is a bare effort of man to free himself from economic captivity. As if the true captivity of man were not spiritual, as if the "Non serviam": I'll have no consideration for anyone or anything but self, were not the truest enslavement...

## II. The Ignatian Saint

For Ignatius's vision of the true man, i.e. Man conformable to the Plan ( the Dream ) of God on his behalf, we must look in the *Constitutions*, in the writings of his first Companions, in particular in the text of the *Letters* of St Francis Xavier, the *Memoriale* of Peter Faber, the *Notes on Prayer* of Jerome Nadal.

1. A sense of the infinite majesty of the Triune God and of His great Works will provoke the soul to shun all narrow and shabby ways, and to adhere instead to those of the Lord through admiration and through dedication: Reverence and service, with unbounded magnanimity. " Those who wish to distinguish themselves in the service of the eternal King will not only ... but will ... make offerings of greater value and more importance ... " — " Desire and choose poverty with Christ poor rather than riches; choose insults with Christ loaded with them rather than honours; desire to be accounted worthless and a fool for Christ, rather than to be esteemed wise and prudent ... "

2. Boundless admiration and magnanimous dedication will inevitably take the aspect of Obedience: Unity of plan and will.

" The highest summit in the matter of obedience ", St Alphonse Rodrigues will exult, " is a very ardent and sublime love which the soul feels towards God, a love which enlightens him and makes him realize that his superior's command comes from God. It is such a love that it could not turn away to disobey." ( *Vie admirable*, p. 175 )

In the Ignatian spirituality the great way of self-abnegation, the night of one's own will, permits the purification and transfiguration of the human will into the divine Will. And Ignatius certainly does not overlook that it is in the Church that the divine Will continues to realize the Dream of God for His intellectual creatures.

3. Zeal and activity. By obedience the soul leaves the self behind to become a docile instrument of the divine activity and be swallowed up, and carried on and away, by the torrent of divine operativeness. But the union must be nursed with the greatest diligence. Ignatian prayer will have to be uninterrupted; Ignatian mysticism will be " an experience of the presence within the soul of the ever-divinizing *Agapé* of God ". Prayer and works of zeal will be as inseparable as soul and body in a living man.

The revolution accomplished by St Ignatius is that the two apparently irreconcilable rivals are fused into one living principle: contemplation in the midst of activity, activity whose breath and muscle-power is contemplation. Casting off the last vestiges of Neo-Platonic techniques, Ignatius's practice and the training his Exercises provide proclaim that the christian mystical union is essentially Love in oneness of will, aim and effectiveness, that transcends psychological technique and can be kept up no matter what the circumstances.

*Cum permissu Superiorum*